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CONNECTION

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Gays win a round

Book battle drags on amid bias charges

BY DREW FAGAN
The Globe and Mail

Classical music greets visitors at the door of the Glad Day Bookshop, Canada's largest bookstore for the homosexual community.

Books on theology and feminism are mixed with the writings of prominent homosexual authors and books on gay themes. The atmosphere is dignified and relaxed.

What is missing are books that have been detained by Canada Customs officials. Two novels in French by Yves Navarre, a winner of France's most prestigious literary award, the Prix Goncourt, were stopped this month.

A collection of poems by Allan Ginsberg, a novel attributed to Oscar Wilde, and a homosexual's memoir of his experience in a Nazi concentration camp received the same treatment a few months ago.

It took weeks before an appeal to Department of National Revenue officials in Ottawa was successful and the books were released for sale.

It's a familiar process that James McPhee, manager of Glad Day, has come to know well. "Practically every day, a notice will appear saying that they've detained something. Everything that does arrive has been opened. We've had about 20 different novels seized this year."

For more than 10 years, the bookstore on Yonge Street in Toronto has kept a file on what has become a steady increase in the seizure of import shipments.

But last week, the bookstore beat Canada Customs. Its challenge of a ban on *The Joy of Gay Sex*, a widely distributed guide on homosexual life and sex practices, was upheld by a district court judge.

The ruling could have broad implications for most of the material, both visual and written, that has been seized. Judge Bruce Hawkins found that despite Canada Customs' strict ban on the importation of material dealing with anal sex, the illustrations in *The Joy of Gay Sex* were not obscene.

"Virtually all the seizures have been due to depictions or descriptions of anal sex," Mr. McPhee said.

Charles Campbell, a civil liberties lawyer, had argued that the illustrations in *The Joy of Gay Sex* did not offend federal obscenity legislation.

But he says it is the detention of novels that he finds most ridiculous.

"When this starts applying to novels, I can't imagine even the most conservative people agreeing to it. The system is totally incapable of evaluating books. What's going on is very dangerous."

The customs operation is a massive and complex one. More than 3,500 officials check goods being imported into Canada.

Though they have little specialized training in evaluating obscene material, they are responsible for detaining goods they feel are in violation of custom guidelines. Those prohibit material that describe such activities as sex with children, bestiality, and sexual violence.

But no banning order is made until one of 24

When clerks act as censors

Edmonton Journal
March 24, 1987

Freedom of information is too important to our society to entrust to the discretion of junior federal clerks.

Yet by allowing customs officers to define obscenity and to censor books, magazines and other materials according to their personal tastes, Ottawa gives them extraordinary powers that are denied even to our elected members of Parliament and the judiciary.

It is the responsibility of politicians to define and legislate obscenity laws; of courts to interpret and uphold them. Border inspectors have no place in the process.

But customs officers continue to seize and censor; they continue to impose their morals on the rest of society, dictating what we may read.

Three months ago they impounded homosexual magazines destined for a Vancouver bookstore. The magazines, which mentioned anal intercourse in a discussion about preventing the spread of acquired immune deficiency syndrome, are available at the Vancouver public library.

A Toronto bookstore has had about 20 different novels seized by customs officers so far this year. They include two novels by the winner of France's most prestigious literary award, a collection of poems by Allan Ginsberg, a novel attributed to Oscar Wilde and a homosexual's memoirs of his experience in a Nazi concentration camp.

More than 3,500 customs officers check goods that are being imported into Canada. While they have little specialized training in evaluating obscene material, they do have a 75-page list of films, magazines, books, video cassettes and comic books to assist them; a six-person, prohibited-importations unit has viewed the material and deemed it obscene under Canada Customs regulations.

But obscenity regulations properly belong in the federal Criminal Code. Under those provisions police can lay charges against those who import and sell so-called pornographic material. And anyone accused of the offence has recourse to due process through the courts.

Empowering customs officers with the right to dictate to Canadians what they can read or view is as distasteful as giving them sweeping censorship rights.

Judge backs gays on book

● From Page One

commodities officials who specialize in obscene material makes a ruling on the item.

Those decisions are in turn based on a list of films, magazines, books, video cassettes and comic books that have been examined by a six-person Prohibited Importations Unit in Ottawa and deemed to be obscene.

It runs more than 75 pages. Much of the material that gets caught in the web is eventually burned.

"The vast majority of it would be viewed by the public as appropriately prohibited," Tom Greig, assistant deputy minister in the Revenue Department, said. "It's all pretty disgusting."

But appeals by importers are frequent and about 250 to 300 prohibition orders are taken to high-level bureaucrats in the Revenue Department for review. It is only then that considerations such as artistic merit are taken into account.

"We give the (customs) people across the country close direction," Mr. Greig said. "On occasion, the first decision will be reversed ... But that doesn't happen often."

Appeals to the courts, as in the Glad Day case, are even less frequent. But Little Sisters, a gay bookstore in Vancouver, is hoping to be equally successful.

Another court challenge of Canada Customs' obscenity regulations has been launched by the British Columbia Civil Liberties Association on behalf of the bookstore.

A decision is expected soon on the detention three months ago of a shipment of 500 books that had been destined for Little Sisters. It included a work by French poet and playwright Jean Genet.

The bookstore's troubles do not stop there. Most of the homosexual magazines it used to import from the United States are no longer available. "They decided it wasn't worth the hassle of trying to get past customs," said Bruce Smyth, a co-owner of Little Sisters.

One of those, New York Native, emphasizes the most recent information available on AIDS. A memorandum from Canada Customs last December stated that material on acquired immune deficiency syndrome would not be prohibited entry simply because it contained "incidental but necessary" references to anal sex.

"That looks great in print, but it's meaningless," Mr. Smyth said. "They just say things for public consumption."

The situation amounts to one thing, Mr. McPhee said. Canada Customs is discriminating against the homosexual community. "There is a very clear anti-gay bias. ... We're being singled out for harsh treatment."

That charge makes Mr. Greig bristle. "The suggestion that we're picking on the homosexual community isn't true at all. The vast majority of prohibited items are heterosexual."

The accusation of discrimination was a key part of the Glad Day case. Mr. Campbell had argued that homosexuals were being treated unfairly because depictions of their sexuality were banned, while the same was not true for heterosexuals.

But court rulings, in addition to Judge Hawkins' decision, have given mixed treatment to cases involving depictions of anal sex — the key issue regarding The Joy of Gay Sex case and censorship concerns in the gay community.

"The Joy of Gay Sex was clearly a difficult call to make and in that case the matter was discussed with the Deputy Minister before a final decision was issued," Mr. Greig said.

Gillian O'Reilly, an official with the Canadian Booksellers Association, said it appears that bookstores such as Glad Day and Little Sisters that cater to the homosexual community are being particularly hard hit by the censors.

"There is relatively little that falls into a grey area," Mr. Greig said. "Those are the ones that are the subject of public debate and in some cases resolution by the courts."

But while Mr. Greig defends the system by emphasizing the opportunity for appeal if blunders are made, Mr. Campbell questions whether bureaucrats should be involved in deciding on such prohibitions in the first place.

"One of the legal arguments that will eventually have to be determined is whether it's justified to have two or three levels of censorship ... The absurdity of all this is that customs officials are being more draconian than the police are."

Mr. Greig acknowledges that bookstores with a track record for importing material that gets seized are going to be more closely checked by customs officers than others. That is only logical, he said.

But that attention has proved to be a serious financial drain on Glad Day and Little Sisters.

In addition to legal costs of more than \$10,000 that Glad Day has incurred, annual store sales of about \$400,000 have dropped by about 20 per cent because of the material that is not getting through and the magazines that are no longer available, Mr. McPhee said.

"When books get banned in the United States, people get furious. That simply hasn't happened here."

Couples club for Bermuda

Only couples need apply when the former Harmony Hall hotel in Paget, Bermuda reopens March 28 after extensive renovations.

Renamed Harmony Club, the hotel is being promoted as a romantic setting for lovers of all ages. Neither children nor singles will be accepted. The new rate of \$280 U.S. per room per day includes three meals, afternoon tea, all drinks, rental of a moped, tennis facilities and other extras.

A marriage certificate is not required and couples of the same sex will be accepted. There are no restrictions on guests at the chain's other Bermuda properties, the Belmont in Warwick and the Bermudiana in Hamilton.

Gay saint causes stir

BALTIMORE (UPI) — An article by a Roman Catholic priest proposing as a homosexual role model a medieval saint who took ice baths to control his "carnal impulses" has caused an uproar in the church.

In January, the Rev. Paul Thomas published an article in the Baltimore archdiocesan newspaper, *The Catholic Review*, about St. Aelred. Thomas wrote that the 12th century saint's "erotic attraction to men remained a dominant force throughout his entire life."

The article said the saint fasted and took icy baths to control his "carnal impulses." Thomas' article suggested that homosexuals use St. Aelred's example as their role model.

The paper got many letters attacking the notion the saint was homosexual.

Baltimore Archbishop William Borders called the piece "way off base" and said he wished it hadn't been printed.

Gala
87
JUNE 20-27

EVENTS SCHEDULED

WOMANSPACE DANCE	JUNE 20
PICNIC	21
GALA 87 DANCE	27
ECUMENICAL SERVICE	28

MORE TO COME, WATCH FOR MORE EVENTS.

NEWS FLASH !!!

NEWFOUNDLAND, YES YOU READ IT RIGHT, HAS HAD MEETINGS WITH GAY ACTIVITISTS WITH A VIEW TO AMENDING THEIR LEGISLATION

THE YUKON HAS PASSED LEGISLATION TO ESTABLISH HUMAN RIGHTS. IT INCLUDES SEXUAL ORIENTATION.

MANITOBA IS CONSIDERING AMENDING THEIR LEGISLATION. RUMOR HAS IT AT THE CABINET LEVEL NOW.

legislating equality

Bill C-212:

by Greg Ip and John Gushue (CUP)

The Roman Emperor Justinian thought there was a simple explanation for earthquakes — homosexuality.

Activists in Ontario say another kind of earthquake shook the province in December when the legislature enshrined gay and lesbian rights in the provincial Human Rights Code. The passage of the amendment to Bill 7 makes Ontario the second province, following Quebec, to prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation.

Now, activists are trying to create an even bigger earthquake: an amendment to the Canadian Human Rights Act which would protect gays and lesbians against discrimination in all areas of federal law, from banks to the Canadian Armed Forces. If passed, it could spur similar amendments to other provincial human rights codes.

But supporters of the federal amendment face fierce and widespread opposition, especially from fundamentalist church groups and other conservative organizations, such as REAL Women, that defend "family values". British Columbia MP Svend Robinson has introduced an amendment to the Canadian Human Rights Act, known as Bill C-212, while the Department of Justice contemplates introducing legislation of its own; either way, Parliament has already been inundated with mail condemning the proposed amendment.

"We had a taste in the Ontario legislature of the kind of hostility and the arguments that would be used against this amendment," Robinson told a gathering of gay and lesbian activists in Ottawa Jan. 19. He was referring to the concerted efforts of the Ontario Conference of Catholic Bishops, the National Citizens Coalition, REAL Women and others to block the amendment to Bill 7. It eventually passed Dec. 2, 64 to 45.

Robinson's motion involves just two words, "sexual orientation", but its implications are far-reaching. With his amendment, the Act would read: "Every individual should have an equal opportunity with other individuals to make for himself or herself the life that he or she is able and wishes to have . . . without being hindered in or prevented from doing so by discriminatory practices based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation or marital status . . ."

The amended act would prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation in all federally regulated industries and agencies, including airlines, banks, most transportation companies, all crown corporations, and, as Robinson calls them, "two of the most homophobic employers in Canada": the RCMP and the Canadian Armed Forces. Discrimination would be banned in both employment practices and provision of services.

Whether Bill C-212 passes depends on how willing and able the Conservative government is to keep the promise then-Justice Minister John Crosbie made in the House last March 4: "The government will take whatever measures are necessary to insure that sexual orientation is a prohibited ground of discrimination in relation to all areas of federal jurisdiction."

The government's promise was helped along by a strong kick in the pants — first from the Canadian Human Rights Commission, then by the Parliamentary Committee on Equality Rights. Both recommended the CHRA be amended to make sexual orientation prohibited grounds for discrimination. The committee's tripartisan report, released in March, was unanimously approved by its members.

But activists fear pressure from the "dinosaur wing" of the Conservative caucus and well-organized lobby groups will force the government to back down on its commitment. Even without a bill on the floor, some Tory backbenchers have shown hostility to any sort of protection for gays.

"Can you feature a fairy RCMP constable trying to arrest a lumberjack with a powder puff?" Alberta Conservative Gordon Taylor asked the Commons Oct. 20. "Can you imagine a lesbian RCMP fairy at the scene of an armed robbery screaming: 'Stop, surrender, or I will hit you over the head with my purse?'"

Taylor, responding to the NDP's support for bringing RCMP hiring policies in line with Robinson's amendment, surprised many of his colleagues with outspoken attacks against gays and lesbians. However, he is not alone; other Conservatives have been equally if not more strident in condemning gays.

Ron Stewart, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Supply and Services, attacked Robinson's bill Dec. 1. "This is not an amendment on sexual orientation. This is an amendment on sexual deviation," Stewart said. "Homosexual is anti-biological, it is anti-medical, anti-biblical . . . it is anti-family, and it is anti-social. It is pro-deviate and it is absolutely disgusting to most Canadians."

In fact, a 1985 national Gallup poll showed about 70 per cent of Canadians polled supported the prohibition of discrimination based on sexual orientation.

However, such polls and the passage of Bill 7 in Ontario only appear to have intensified the anti-gay lobby's fight. At the forefront of the

The amended act would prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation in all federally regulated industries . . . including . . . "two of the most homophobic employers in Canada": the RCMP and the Canadian Armed Forces.

latest campaign is the Toronto area-based fundamentalist coalition Evangelical Fellowship of Canada, Canadian University Press has determined.

The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada has already started coordinating the anti-gay and lesbian effort by sending information to its member churches on who to write to in Parliament, and what to tell them. Justice Minister Ray Hnatyshyn, Liberal justice critic Robert Kaplan and NDP justice critic Robinson are all receiving a steady flow of letters protesting the proposed amendment.

Brian Stiller, director of the Fellowship, which claims to represent between two and 2.5 million Canadians, is deeply worried by the implications of amending the federal Act.

"We are for justice and rights for homosexuals — that's not our contention," Stiller said. "Our contention is that there is no need to

group homosexuals into special categories. You wouldn't put obese people into a special group, so why should you put homosexuals into a special group?"

Stiller said the Fellowship will soon issue a "National Alert" to its members, further warning of advances made by the gay rights movement. The Fellowship, he said, has already come out strongly against Robinson's amendment with a pamphlet, *Uncharted Waters*, which describes hazards the amendment might entail.

"Our first concern is that a volunteer agency (such as Big Brothers) could lose its right to define its own code of conduct," Stiller said. "Private and religious schools would also be forced to teach homosexuality as an acceptable alternative lifestyle."

The letters have already begun to arrive en masse, attacking proposed government legislation.

"Just today, we received 22 letters opposed to this legislation, although it hasn't even been introduced," Dave Pepper, a researcher in Robinson's office, said in an interview. "Obviously there is an organized campaign out there, which has begun its work." But Pepper adds, "There has also been a very concerted letter-writing campaign in support of this legislation."

Some anti-gay and lesbian letters, obtained by Canadian University Press but without signatures of authors, are remarkably similar although they originate from different provinces. Writers call on Hnatyshyn to not "let our people go to the dogs, so to speak, by opening up this Pandora's box of evil" or "give undue protection to the 'rights' of select groups of people at the expense of the rights of those who live in the mainstream of our society."

"Why single out for special favour what is possibly the most anti-social behaviour, short of pre-meditated murder, known to mankind?" one letter reads. "Please consider and promote the health of our nation!" implores another.

Robinson brushes aside most such letters. "I get a lot of hate mail," he said. "I just file it."

Likewise, activists lobbying for Bill C-212 are not deterred by the ferocity of the opposition they face. Debbie Hughes, a member of EGALÉ (Equality for Gays and Lesbians Everywhere), said her group has met all the "normal resistance," but it doesn't bother them. EGALÉ is an Ottawa-based lobby group whose 20-odd members have taken on most of the physical lobbying in support of Bill C-212.

"I don't see where we can lose. We have the two largest provinces protected, and we have the federal civil service protected," said Hughes. "The kind of rhetoric that's been dressed up as religious belief is still discrimination by any other name, and I think that people are smart enough to recognize this nonsense."

Nonetheless, Hughes says her group is still counting on the speedy passage of the amendment. "We would like to see this legislation in place for March," she said. Otherwise, "you run into election mode and nobody does anything that's controversial during that period."

The ones worrying most about doing controversial things are the MPs themselves. As the divisive vote in the Ontario legislature on Bill 7 proved, a member's political stripe doesn't dictate his or her vote.

Susan Fish, one of four Conservative MPs to break ranks from her caucus and support the amended Bill 7, says Conservative principles and gay liberation are not mutually exclusive. "I believe in the principle of the dignity of the individual, which is a Conservative belief," said Fish, who will try to influence federal Tories when debate on C-212 begins. (Fish, one of the most outspoken advocates in the legislature, was heavily lobbied before the amendment vote, receiving about 2,500 letters.)

For his part, Phil Gillies, the Brantford MPP who joined Fish in supporting the amendment to the Ontario Human Rights Code, bore a lot of jokes when he addressed EGALÉ, about spending a "chilly winter in Brantford."

"I know of colleagues of mine who would like to have supported it (the amendment to Bill 7), but because of the incredible barrage of opposition in their constituencies, they decided not to," Gillies said.

The New Democratic and Liberal parties are officially on record as supporting Robinson's amendment, with a few exceptions, including Liberal John Nunziata. The Conservative caucus will likely not vote as a block, given pronounced divisions between key Tories. While the vote of anti-gay backbenchers such as Gordon Taylor, Ron Stewart, Jim Jepson and John Reimer is predictable, many other MPs will vote carefully on amending the Act.

Gay and lesbian activists say support in public opinion polls for gay rights may sway the votes some undecided votes, while fear of a backlash in constituencies may prevent others from casting support.

There also appears to be a split in Cabinet. Health and Welfare Minister Jake Epp is an Evangelical follower (and appears on a cover of the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada's magazine, *Faith Today*), and may meet opposition from Red Tories like International Trade Minister Pat Carney, who first introduced a gay rights amendment to the human rights act while the Tories were in opposition in 1980.

And if the amendment eventually does pass, will the gay rights battle be won? Hughes says it's hard to ask for more at the moment. Protecting sexual orientation in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms would be best, but Robinson's attempt to include such protection during the constitutional battles of

"Our contention is that there is no need to group homosexuals into special categories. You wouldn't put obese people into a special group . . ."

1981 was voted down in committee by 22 to two. Nonetheless, a Charter case being fought right now by a man demoted from the RCMP for being gay might accomplish that.

In other parts of the country, the Yukon Territory is introducing a comprehensive human rights code which includes sexual orientation as a prohibited grounds for discrimination, and Manitoba Attorney-General Roland Penner is planning to introduce similar legislation this spring.

Although no amount of legislation will change deep-seated attitudes towards gays and lesbians, it can still have a positive effect on how legislators behave, says Hughes.

The struggle for gay rights is simply a struggle for human rights.

"If sexual orientation was protected (in the Human Rights Act), would it have been possible for an MP to stand up in the House of Commons and call a person a powder puff? Could they do it to a black person? Would they do it with the legislation?" she said. With an amendment to the act, "I don't think everybody would accept it, but I think people would think twice about making derogatory remarks."

Hughes is disturbed by how her group's goals have been called anti-family and anti-social, and emphasizes that the struggle for gay rights is simply a struggle for human rights.

"Some of us are married and have our own children. When people say we don't have family values, it's a lie. We were not hatched from dinosaur eggs. We are the children of people who gave us family values."

Thank-you to the contributors:

writers:

Matt Hays
Don Doran
Sidney Lancaster

and special thanks to:
Ann Lynagh
Jerome Ryckborst

The only unnatural sex act is one that can't be performed.

Alfred Kinsey

Some people say, "If you have homosexual teachers, you're automatically going to have homosexual students." I don't know about that theory. Because if it were true, today I would be a nun.

Mark Russell

TOM, JIM & CANADA CUSTOMS

On July 2, 1986 I got a brown envelope from Canada Customs office in Regina containing a notice of detention, a form letter saying some drawings by Tom of Finland, which I had ordered from an address in California, had been seized under Tariff Item 99201-1. I had 90 days to appeal the decision.

I made a trip to the public library to learn about the Customs Tariff and the Criminal Code. The items were seized under Tariff Item 99201-1 which read:

Any publication, the dominant characteristic of which is the undue exploitation of sex or of sex and any one or more of the following subjects, namely crime, horror, cruelty and violence, shall be deemed obscene.

This was obviously not a description of Tom of Finland's drawings, so I filled out Form B2A, which is a Request for Re-determination, and typed a three-page defense of Tom of Finland. I mailed my appeal to Regina July 18, 1986 where a customs appraiser looks at the material and makes a decision.

My letter basically pointed out that image of men with huge cocks were not obscene, that they had been reproduced elsewhere in Canadian publications

On August 11, 1986, I got a one-sentence reply: "The goods have been reviewed and are deemed to be obscene under the terms of Tariff Item 99201-1 of Schedule C of the Customs Tariff."

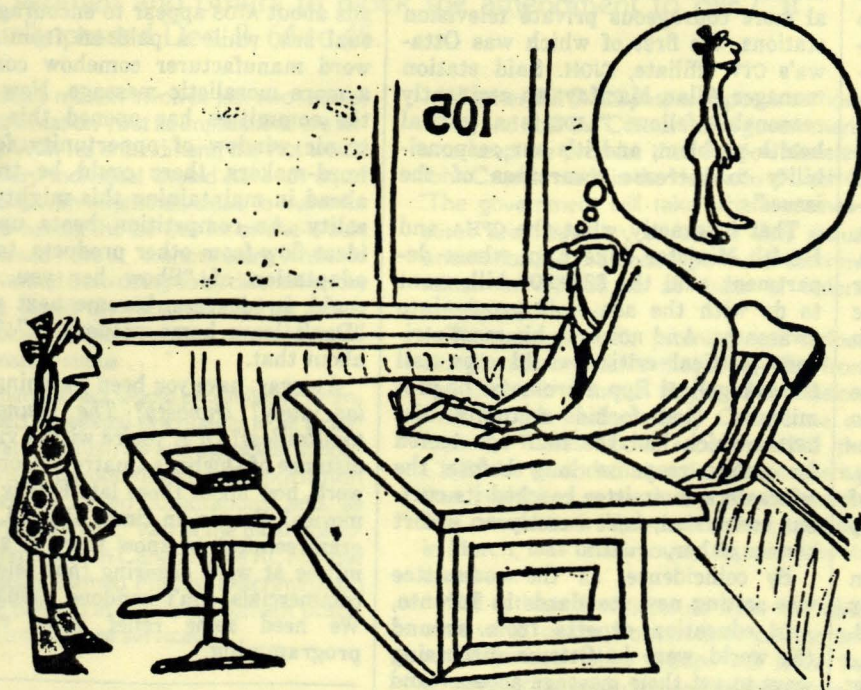
The next step in the appeal process is form K14D, Request to Deputy Minister for Re-determination.

On September 22, 1986 I sent to Ottawa form K14D and a similar three-page defence of Tom of Finland that I sent to Regina, this time to be reviewed by the Deputy Minister of Customs and Excise. On January 13, 1987 I got a reply:

The articles in question have been reviewed by the Deputy Minister pursuant to subsection 63(3) of the Customs Act and it is his decision that they have been correctly classified as obscene under Tariff Item 99201-1 of Schedule C of the Customs Tariff. Consequently, their importation is prohibited.

Although it is possible to launch an appeal in Federal Court under section 68 of the Customs Tariff Act, the story stops here. The government wins because they have money (taxpayers' money) and power on their side.

PERCEPTIONS ISSUE 31



MY MOTHER FEELS MUCH SAFER NOW THAT WE'VE
KICKED OUT THOSE GAY TEACHERS...

**Is your sex life
obscene? Ask Canada Customs.**

A different way of saying it

Maclean's
March 30, 1987

By Stewart MacLeod

Mind you, we're somewhat short on scientific evidence here, but surely Canada stands alone on the gold-medal podium when it comes to creating crises to suit a slogan. In most other countries, it's the other way around.

But remember the great Conscription Crisis, built around the supreme suitability of "Not necessarily conscription, but conscription if necessary." Then the Constitutional Crisis, with the equally appropriate "Not necessarily separatism, but separatism if necessary."

And now, in an otherwise enlightened world, we find ourselves locked in The Great Canadian Condom Crisis. Sorry to blurt out that word—which probably sizzles the sensitivities of some private telecasters—but we wanted to get it over with early. Now—whew!—having established the subject matter, we can move forward with on-air gentility to deal with what appears to be a case of "Not necessarily the C-word, but the C-word if necessary."

That oft-adopted slogan once again seems to be what we're trying to say in the message-is-the-medium battle, pitting telecaster against telecaster, TV good-taste judges against public health officials, the odd cabinet minister, preacher against preacher and Lord knows who else. Canadian discussions about the C-word are, generally speaking, less open than talk of, say, sugarless chewing gum.

Anyway, what we're getting at is that ruling by the Telecaster Committee of Canada, usually described as an "umbrella group" which screens commercials for 20 private broadcasters, including the CTV and Global networks. The committee has ruled that, of four ads prepared by the Canadian Public Health Association (CPHA) to warn people about AIDS, only one was acceptable. The others, in the collective wisdom of the screeners, appear to condone "casual sex"—as opposed, presumably, to the more formal variety. There also seems to be the question of whether using C-word-plural wrongly implies complete protection.

All three rejected ads say that in the war against AIDS, casual sex should be avoided or a C-word used.

The only ad approved, showing a happily married couple holding hands while the kids play checkers, doesn't mention the product we're talking about with such delicacy. Comfortable family viewing; for the manufacturers of checker boards, inspirational viewing.

The day following the rejection of these free public service ads, the same committee approved in principle two paid commercials from C-word manufacturers. Neither mention AIDS, casual sex or, for that matter, formal sex. And not having seen the ads, one can only guess what they may appear to condone. But it seems somewhat unlikely that cross-country skiing jumps immediately to mind.

Mercifully, and I am sorry it took so long getting around to this—blurring the word was an awesome distraction—the CBC, after "intense" study,

'Now, having established the subject matter, we can move forward with on-air gentility to deal with . . . the C-word'

decided that all four public service ads are acceptable for airing. So did several more courageous private television stations, the first of which was Ottawa's CTV affiliate, CJOH. Said station manager Allan MacKay, an eminently reasonable fellow: "AIDS is a critical health problem, and it's our responsibility to increase awareness of the issue."

That is exactly what the CPHA and Health Minister Jake Epp, whose department paid the \$250,000 bill, want to do with the ads—jolt people into awareness. And not even his most strident political critics would ever call the evangelical Epp a promoter of promiscuity. God forbid! Actually, the CPHA, which had the four ads tested for public response long before the telecasters committee reached its curious conclusion, isn't exactly an escort service either.

By coincidence, as the committee was setting new standards in Toronto, AIDS education experts from around the world were in Ottawa discussing ways to get their message across—and the Toronto decision probably provided

the only light relief of the two-day meeting.

One Danish delegate, obviously a diplomat of distinction, thought the committee decision "a little unbelievable." Then, of course, came the shocking story of Prince Philip, who, in meeting British MPs, not only used the C-word but suggested that sales might be boosted with catchy colors. And the naughty news services carried the story to the ends of the earth. Although a sailor by trade, the prince's interest must be, unquestionably, artistic. Anyway, if he happens to pop up in a commercial, surely our good-taste telecasters will give him the benefit of the doubt.

Whether the Queen will is quite another matter.

There are times, as painful as it might be, when appeals to the public are so sadly ludicrous that only laughter will offer relief. And what immediately comes to mind here is the thought of millions of TV viewers subjected to sermonized ads from Rev. Oral Roberts, who claims he is being held hostage by, of all people, God. Unless listeners come across with \$4.5 million—credit cards will do nicely—Rev. Roberts will be a gonorrhea by April Fool's Day. That's hard to top.

But right after it, surely, comes the decision by our Telecaster Committee of Canada that free public service ads about AIDS appear to encourage casual sex, while a paid ad from a C-word manufacturer somehow conveys a more moralistic message. Now that the committee has opened this electronic window of opportunity for C-word-makers, there could be trouble ahead in maintaining this mighty morality. As competition heats up and ideas flow from other products, today's adaptation of "Show her you care" could, by degrees, become next year's "Don't leave home without it." Think about that.

Anyway, have you been watching *Dallas* lately? *Dynasty*? *The Young and the Restless*? Or if you're within viewing distance of Quebec's Quatre Saisons network, how about those late Friday night movies? Yes sir, in times of need, it's a great comfort to know there is a committee at work ensuring that television commercials don't condone casual sex. We need some relief from routine programming.

Stewart MacLeod is Ottawa columnist for Thomson News Service.

THIS YEAR'S CONFERENCE FEATURES NEW DATE! NEW COMMITTEE! NEW APPROACH!

The Vancouver Gay and Lesbian Community Centre will hold its fourth annual B.C. Regional Lesbian and Gay Conference from May 16 to 18, at the University of British Columbia's Student Union Building. The expanded conference's new time frame is to allow greater access to out-of-town participants.

Over two hundred people from all over the province and beyond are expected to come and explore this year's theme, "Breaking Barriers". There will be over twenty different workshops, as well as forums, and panel discussions dealing with a wide range of issues concerning the lesbian and gay community.

This year's conference committee is a new team, with a new approach. We are committed to making this the most inclusive, most accessible, most relevant conference ever. We have introduced a conference registration fee on a sliding scale based on ability to pay. Special attention has been paid to ensure that there is equal representation and input from lesbians and gay men in the conference content.

To date, confirmed workshops include those that deal with Sexual Orientation Legislation in Canada, Gays and Lesbians and the Law, Living with AIDS, The Worried Well, Unlearning Racism, Integrating the Disabled into the Community, Lesbian S/M, Gay and Lesbian Youth, Personal and Community Mobilization, Spirituality and Ritual in the Gay and Lesbian Community, Feminism for Men, Communication in Lesbian Relationships, Financial Planning and Making Money - from Rent Parties to Major Fundraisers. A more detailed list of workshops will be published in

early May.

The conference dance, which is co-sponsored by the Gays and Lesbians of UBC, will be held at the Student Union Building ballroom on Sunday, May 17, from 8:00 pm. Admission is on a sliding scale from \$3 to \$5. Tickets will be available at the conference registration desk on the second floor of the SUB, as well as at Little Sister's, Ariel Books, the Vancouver Lesbian Centre and the Vancouver Gay and Lesbian Community Centre.

Accessibility is a major concern for this year's conference committee. Speakers and entertainment will be scattered throughout the conference schedule rather than having keynotes at a separate banquet as in the past. There will be a showing of lesbian and gay films throughout the schedule of the conference. A schedule will be available at the registration desk.

All events are wheelchair accessible. Childcare and signing for the hearing impaired are also available. Participants with special needs are requested to pre-register by May 1.

See you at the conference!

Lea Dawson
James Johnstone
Co-Chairs

1987 Conference Committee

For further information contact the Vancouver Gay and Lesbian Community Centre, 1170 Bute Street, Vancouver, 684-6869, or the Vancouver Lesbian Centre, 876 Commercial Drive, Vancouver, 254-8458.

What really felt good was the total honesty I could now display with everyone. I no longer had to censor my views, experiences, emotions and feelings. I could be my own person and not have to bother with lies about my relationships.

Ian Patterson, Harry Ainlay student on coming out in high school.

The love that dare not speak its name.

Oscar Wilde

The love that won't shut up.

Mike Nichols

Who is Mike Nichols ????

HATE HURTS!

Until you recognize me in your family, I am the faceless Canadian who suffers from your discrimination . . .

Until you recognize me as your mother, your father, your brother, your sister, your aunt, your uncle, your friend.

On March 4, 1986 the federal government promised to "take whatever measures are necessary to ensure that sexual orientation is a prohibited ground of discrimination . . ."
(from TOWARD EQUALITY).

YOUR VOICE IS NEEDED NOW!

Write a letter to your Member of Parliament and the Prime Minister. Encourage others to write as well.

EGALE (Equality for Gays and Lesbians Everywhere).
P.O. Box 2891, Station D, Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5W9.
Telephone (613) 230-4391.

Dear EGALE,

- ☐ I believe in equality for all. The federal government should act now to amend the Canadian Human Rights Act.
- ☐ I enclose a financial contribution (not tax deductible) to help EGALE.
- ☐ I would like more information about EGALE.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ Province _____

Postal Code _____ Signature _____

EGALE is a coalition of concerned individuals and organizations who are lobbying the federal government to amend the Canadian Human Rights Act to include sexual orientation as a prohibited ground of discrimination.

Pre-registration Form

BREAKING BARRIERS

Name: _____
Organization: _____
Address: _____
Postal Code: _____
Telephone: _____

Please indicate if you require:

Signing ☐ (How old are the children?) _____
Childcare ☐ (Do you smoke?) _____
Billeting ☐

Persons with special needs are requested to pre-register by May 1.

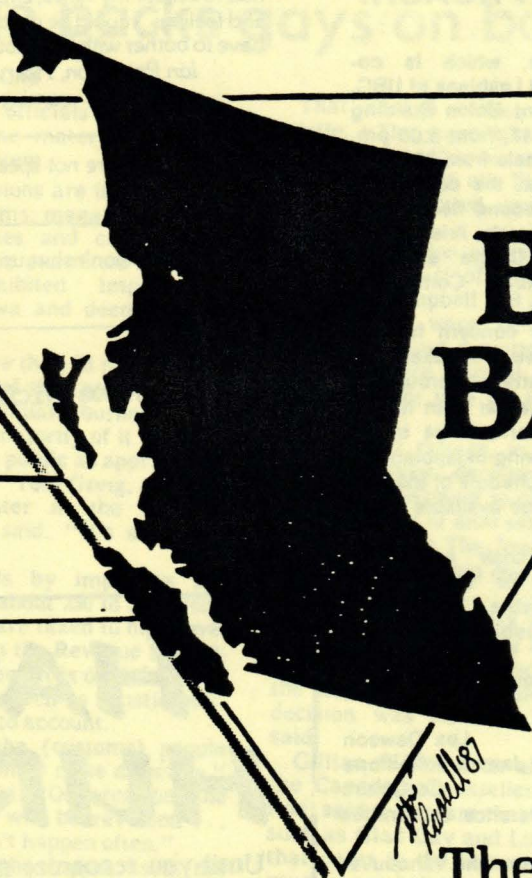
Please note that this year the conference registration fee is on a sliding scale, based on ability to pay. We provide the following suggested rate scale based on the monthly income of a single person with no dependants:

\$0 - 500/month	What you can pay
501 - 750	\$10
751 - 1000	20
1001 - 1250	12
1251 - 1500	25
1501 - 1750	30
1750+	35

Conference cost does not include admission to *Breaking Barriers* Dance on the evening of Sunday, May 18. Tickets are available on sliding scale of \$3 to \$5 at conference registration table on second floor of Student Union Building throughout the conference as well as at Little Sister's, Ariel Books, VLC and VGLCC.

Make cheques payable to VGLCC - Conference, and mail to VGLCC Conference, 1170 Bute St, Vancouver, BC, V6E 1Z6.

Vancouver Gay and Lesbian Community Centre
presents



BREAKING BARRIERS

The Fourth Annual B.C. Regional
Lesbian And Gay Conference

University of British Columbia
Student Union Building

MAY 16, 17, 18, 1987

CONFERENCE DANCE

SUNDAY MAY 17, \$300 to \$500

Wheelchair Accessible
Signing for Hearing Impaired
Childcare Available

For More Information 684-6869

Three Days of
Workshops

Forums

Gay & Lesbian Film
And other fun stuff

Gala

CIVIL
RIGHTS
COMMITTEE
BOX 53
EDMONTON
T5J 2G9